

LES' PICKS

Graham and Gann Are Knifemakers to Watch

By Les Robertson

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TERRILL HOFFMAN



The Graham knives: large Bowie with a 10-inch blade, stainless steel guard with bronze spacer and a desert ironwood handle. Price is \$500.

At the Blade Show 2005 I was introduced by Peter Gill to a brand-new American Bladesmith Society Journeyman Smith named Tommy Gann. Peter thought Tommy's work was something that I should see as well. That year, the judges for prestigious "George Peck Award," given to the best knife made by a new Journeyman Smith,

were impressed as well and voted that award to Tommy.

Tommy's knives have a strong art influence; this was provided primarily by his main instructor Tim Hancock. Lets face it, if you are going to study with someone, having access to Tim will give you a huge advantage over a lot of knifemakers. The path for Tommy is clear—he wants to create knives with artistic features, and

he is very good at it. His travel down this path was again evident because he won the award for "Best of Show" at the Knives Illustrated Spirit of Steel Show. There was plenty of world-class competition at this show for Tommy to receive this award. In addition to that he won the award for "Most Innovative Knife."

While Tommy can make impressive art knives, his standard models are equally

The Cowboy Fighter with desert ironwood: 7 1/2-inch blade and a stainless steel guard. Price is \$575.



impressive. He has the ability to accentuate all of his knives without over doing it. Of particular note is his file and wire inlay work. His abilities allow him to work with a wide variety of materials. This includes everything from micarta to ivory for handles and, of course, the standard carbon steels, as well as his Damascus.

Tommy is a full-time maker and is able to balance his orders and knives for shows. This is no easy task because he attends three to four shows a year. This includes The Arkansas Custom Knife Show, the Blade Show and the previously mentioned Knives Illustrated Spirit of Steel Show. His current delivery time is right at

six months.

Tommy is well on his way to earning his Mastersmith stamp. If you can't make to show that Tommy attends you can check out his knives at: www.tgannknives.com or call him at (903) 848-9375. The demand for Tommy's work is only going to increase, so I

The Gann Cowboy Fighter with stag, additional filework and twisted wire inlay. Price is \$700.

